REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

New independent claim 22 constitutes original claim 10 written in independent form. Since claim 10 was indicated as directed to allowable subject matter, it is submitted that claim 22 is allowable, along with new dependent claim 23 which corresponds to claim 8.

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the liquid passage space is of a shape preventing liquid from being trapped therein when the liquid flows in such space. As explained on page 2 of the specification, trapped liquid creates an environment in which bacteria can more easily grow. (See also the paragraph bridging pages 13 and 14).

Claim 1 stands rejected over Leinsing that discloses a connector whose liquid passage space is formed by a bellows 44 which, by its very configuration, forms bays or pockets that tend to trap liquid, leading to a greater possibility of bacteria growth, in contrast to the presently claimed invention. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 distinguishes patentably over Leinsing.

Claim 5

Claim 5 recites that the center lines of the respective first and second female joint ports (e.g., ports 30, 40 of the depicted preferred embodiment) are "skew lines." As defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, skew lines are "straight lines that do not intersect and are not in the same plane." By arranging the first and second female joint ports such that their respective center lines are skew lines, certain advantages result. For example, a mechanism which moves and supports a valve

body in the X-axis direction does not interfere with a mechanism which moves and supports a valve body in the Y-axis direction. Thus, greater versatility is provided in the types of layouts that can be achieved using the claimed connector.

In contrast, Leinsing discloses a connector whose female joint ports have respective center lines that intersect and lie in a common plane. Accordingly, claim 5 distinguishes in a meaningful and patentable way from Leinsing's connector.

Claim 7

Independent claim 7 has been amended to emphasize that the male joint member is connected to the valve body to move therewith relative to the housing when the valve body is pressed by a tube. That feature (which is also described in the final paragraph of claim 7 as originally filed) can be visualized in Fig. 10 where a tube 100 pushes the valve body 6, causing that valve body to be displaced along its center line and against the action of a spring 15. Moreover, since the male joint member 50 is joined to the valve body through the members 2, 21, 22, the male joint member moves together with the valve body as recited in the final paragraph of claim 7. As a result, the liquid passage 12 is isolated from the pressing forces and cannot be deformed thereby (see the paragraph bridging pages 20 and 21). Also, a backflow of fluid is prevented by this claimed device.

In contrast, Leinsing discloses an arrangement where the pressing of a tube 60 against the valve body 24 produces a deforming of the latter, but no accompanying movement of the male joint member relative to the "housing" 16. Hence, the force isolation achieved by the presently claimed invention does not occur. Also, backflow is not prevented in Leinsing's device. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 7 distinguishes patentably over Leiping.

In light of the foregoing comments, it is submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: June 4, 2008

By: _____
Alan E. Kopecki
Registration No. 25813

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
703 836 6620